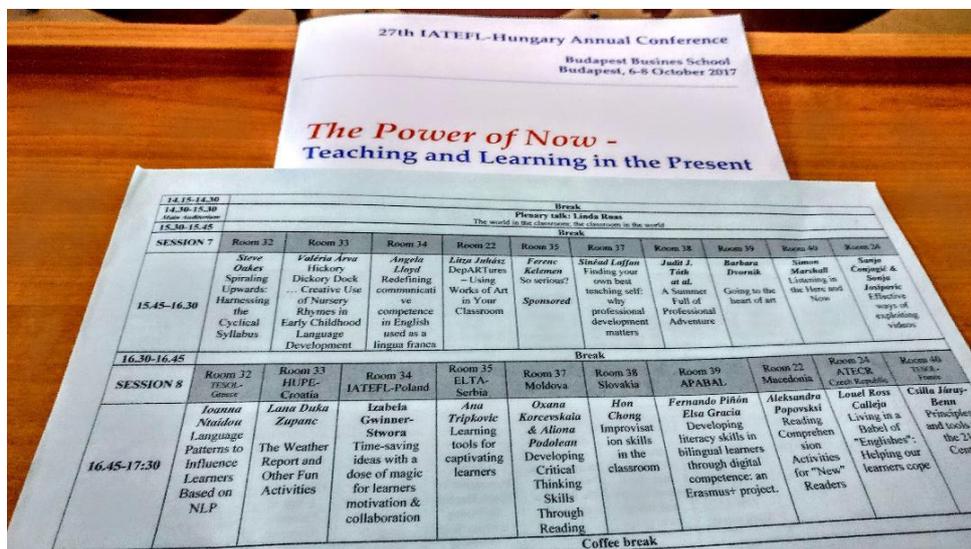


The IATEFL-Hungary Conference 2017: A Report

Last October 6-8, I was fortunate enough to have been given the chance to represent the Association of English Teachers of the Czech Republic at the 27th IATEFL Hungary Conference („The Power of Now“) at the Budapest Business School Faculty of International Management and Business in Hungary



The Speakers

The conference featured a great set of plenary speakers who talked about a range of interesting topics: Éva Illés, a Hungarian resource speaker, talked about bridging the gap between research and education in ELT. Evan Frenzo, a published author and a specialist in Business English talked about the importance of needs analysis and gave some valuable tips on how to do it right. UK-based teacher trainer Linda Ruas, whose book, *Global Issues A-Z*, is coming out very soon talked about the importance of bringing the world to the classroom through critical pedagogy (i.e., making students aware of global and social issues).



Angela Lloyd talking about teaching English as a Lingua Franca

IATEFL Hungary was also able to attract speakers/official representatives from ten different countries—Czech Republic, Slovakia, Croatia, Moldavia, France, Spain, Greece, Poland, Serbia, and Macedonia—who talked about a variety of topics (English as a Lingua Franca, motivation, the use of technology, 21st century life skills). All the workshops given by the official representatives from various countries were received very well, which is why I do regret that the organizers decided to have us all present at the same time as I would have loved to attend some of the seminars presented by my co-delegates.



Johanna Szoke talking about World Englishes

The Host Association



ATECR's representative Louel Ross Calleja (right) with IATEFL Slovakia's Hon Chong

As a presenter and an official representative of the Czech Republic, I felt that the IATEFL Hungary organizers were very attentive to all our needs. They were warm, hospitable and accommodating. Beatrix Price, who was President of IATEFL Hungary at the time, and Claudia Molnar, head of the conference committee, did a sterling job leading the whole team.

I also enjoyed the International Evening as it gave me the chance to bond with my fellow representatives. I also got to learn a few things about the countries they represented.

My session (Living in a Babel of Englishes: Helping our Learners Cope)

I talked about World Englishes and English as a Lingua Franca. Basically this means that we should acknowledge that the realms of the English language extend far beyond the shores of England and the United States. I argued that it was high time we acknowledged that L2 speakers of English be considered as co-owners, co-stewards, and co-arbiters of linguistic and pedagogic norms. I specifically talked about the following points:

- 1) There is a core phonological group that needs to be taught to our learners if they were to be intelligible speakers of English.
- 2) Language correctness is relative.
- 3) The focus should not be on accent reduction, but, rather, on accent addition. Moreover, students should be made to feel that it is okay to have an accent.
- 4) We should encourage our students to use English to talk about their own culture. This is called „glocalization“—localizing a global product such as English.

I am very happy with the way my seminar on World Englishes was received. I liked the way the audience responded to my questions and shared their ideas. It was very interactive.

Worthy of note is the fact that two other speakers—Johanna Szoke from Hungary and Angela Lloyd from the UK—gave sessions that complemented mine. Ms. Szoke dealt with World Englishes while Ms. Lloyd talked about the challenges and opportunities in teaching English as a Lingua Franca.

My experience in Budapest was very positive, and I am hoping to welcome Hungary's representative to our conference in Hradec Kralove next September. We are hoping that our conference will measure up to IATEFL Hungary's.

Louel Ross Calleja (Official Representative, ATECR)